A

SERMON

Preached before the RIGHT HONOURABLE the

LORD-MAYOR,

THE

COURT of ALDERMEN,

AND THE

LIVERIES of the ſeveral COMPANIES of the CITY of *LONDON*,

IN THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH of St. *PAUL*,

On *THURSDAY*, *November* 29, 1759;

Being the Day appointed by Proclamation for a GENERAL THANKSGIVING to GOD;

For vouchſafing ſuch ſignal Succeſſes to His Majeſty's Arms, both by Sea and Land, particularly by the Defeat of the *French* Army in *Canada*, and the Taking of *Quebec*; and for moſt ſeaſonably granting us at this Time an uncommonly plentiful Harveſt.

By *JAMES TOWNLEY*, M.A.

Rector of the united Pariſhes of St. *Bennet*, *Grace-Church*, and St. *Leonard*, *Eaſtcheap*, and Lecturer of St. *Dunſtan's in the Eaſt*.

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CHITTY, *Mayor.*

Tueſday *the* 11*th Day of* December, 1759, *and in the Thirty-third Year of the Reign of King* GEORGE *the Second, of* Great Britain, *&c.*

IT is ordered that the Thanks of this Court be given to the Reverend Mr. *Townley*, for his Sermon preached before the Lord-Mayor and Aldermen, and ſeveral of the Livery Companies of this City, at the Cathedral Church of St. *Paul*, on *Thurſday* the 29th Day of *November* laſt, being the Day appointed by His Majeſty for a public Thankſgiving, and that he be deſired to print the ſame.

HODGES.

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE

Sir THOMAS CHITTY, *Knt.*

LORD-MAYOR,

THE

ALDERMEN,

AND

CITIZENS of *LONDON*,

THIS

SERMON,

Is, with all RESPECT, Dedicated, by

Their moſt obliged, and

Moſt obedient Servant,

Dec. 31, 1759.

James Townley.

PSALM CXXII. 6.

They ſhall proſper that love Thee.

THIS Pſalm was compoſed by holy *David*, for the Uſe of the People of *Iſrael*, when they went up to *Jeruſalem*, to worſhip at the appointed Solemnities: And the Deſign of it was to inſpire them with a Regard and Love for their Country. His principal Care therefore was to conſider what Means would be moſt effectual to this Purpoſe; and his Wiſdom and Experience ſoon led him to obſerve, that nothing was ſo likely to raiſe this public Spirit, as a Promiſe of Proſperity; a Motive which would have great Influence on the human Mind, and, more particularly, among a People who were intently fixed on the Enjoyment of temporal Happineſs.

The Love which a Man bears to the Country wherein he was born is an univerſal Principle, which was, no Doubt, implanted in the human Breaſt, by the all-wiſe Creator, as an Incentive to great and good Actions; and indeed the Effects of it have been ſuch as a Principle leſs extenſive could never have produced.

Hiſtory will furniſh us with numberleſs Examples of this Truth, but happy is it for us that we need not look farther than our own Age and Nation.

All Men are born with this exalted Principle; it is ſtamp'd upon every Heart: But to be in a Situation that may make it of great and ſignal Service is the Lot only of a Few: The common People feel it very ſtrongly; but cannot, as Individuals, make it of any material Advantage. In Perſons of Rank, and with Abilities equal to their Rank, it may have its utmoſt Scope; nor can they, at any Time, forget the Duty which it preſcribes

ſcribes, without making themſelves the Objects of perpetual Diſgrace.

This perhaps may be more clearly underſtood, by pointing out an Inſtance or two, in which this great Principle, THE LOVE OF OUR COUNTRY, may be exerted.

He, who is bleſs'd with ſuperior Talents, and in a proper Situation to exert them, will give the ſureſt Proof of his Patriotiſm, by the Reverence which he pays to the Religion of his Country; and this not only by aſſenting in general to the Doctrines of it, but by a ſtrict Obſervance of the Duties which it preſcribes. Piety gives the beſt Luſtre to Greatneſs. It ennobles the Faculties of the Mind, and ſanctifies their Uſe, making them, as *Solomon* elegantly ſpeaks, *like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver*. The Man who is of this happy Diſpoſition has an infinite Advantage over thoſe whoſe irreligious Sentiments, and depraved Morals, exactly, but fatally correſpond: For they can never obtain the Confidence of the Publick,

Publick, becauſe, having no Principle, they will of courſe diſregard every Obligation: Whereas a religious Man meets with, and deſerves the implicit Truſt that is repoſed in him; a Truſt which he can never abuſe who conſiders himſelf as accountable to God for all his Actions.

Again; He who loves his Country, will conſcientiouſly obſerve the Laws which it has eſtabliſhed. In every well regulated State equal Regard is paid to the Power of the Governor, and to the Liberties of thoſe who are governed. It is extremely difficult to avoid particular Attachments. Men incline to a Side or Party, as Intereſt, or Education, or Humour happens to direct; but the true Patriot forms his Judgment and determines his Actions by the golden Mean: He faithfully renders all due Reſpect and Service to the Majeſty of Princes, but without ſacrificing the Liberty of the Subject, and zealouſly exerts every Ability, leſt Power ſhould grow into Tyranny,

Tyranny, or Liberty degenerate into Licentiouſneſs.

Farther; Every one of great Abilities, who is employed in the Service of his Country will endeavour to cheriſh in his Mind all thoſe Virtues which his Station is capable of exerciſing. He who holds the Reins of Government, a Taſk ſo arduous that few have even a Conception of it, may be cautious; but he muſt be void of Fear. The conſcious Integrity of his Heart will ſupply him with Steadineſs and Courage; and though the Weight of Power may ſometimes oppreſs, yet will the Uprightneſs of his Intentions inſpire him with a Reſolution ſuperior to every Difficulty. He acts with uncommon Vigor in detecting, by Vigilance, the falſe Friends; and oppoſing, by Intrepidity, the avowed Enemies of his Country. He calls forth every Virtue for the Service of his royal Maſter, and, what is inſeparably connected with it, the general Welfare of the State. Generoſity, Honour, and a Regard for the public Good are con-

ſpicuous in him; without which the moſt diſtinguiſhed Abilities are, to all virtuous and honourable Purpoſes, utterly ineffectual: And theſe great and neceſſary Virtues will be ſo conſtantly guarded and defended by him, that no bold preſumptuous Vice, or little Meanneſs, will be able to mix with them, and by that Means, either ſully or debaſe their Excellence. For can the Avaritious, the Profligate, or the Ambitious, whoſe ſole Aim, is to devour, to corrupt, and to enſlave, be called LOVERS OF THEIR COUNTRY?

But we ſhall be fully inſtructed in this great and amiable Character, by ſumming up every Circumſtance belonging to it, in the conciſe and expreſſive Terms of one who derived his Knowledge from the Fountain of Truth —. LOVE THE BROTHERHOOD — FEAR GOD — HONOUR THE KING.

Having thus pointed out ſome particular Inſtances, in which that great Principle, THE LOVE

OF

OF OUR COUNTRY, may be properly exerted, it will be of Uſe to examine into the Reaſons on which the Aſſertion in the Text may be founded, *They ſhall proſper that love Thee.*

The true Lover of his Country has Reaſon to hope for Proſperity, from the Means which he makes uſe of to attain Succeſs. A good Intention, however laudable, will not be ſufficient of itſelf to make any Deſign proſperous; but if the Plan be well laid, and the conſtituent Parts are firm and well connected, and if theſe Eſſentials are founded on the beſt Intention, namely, the true Intereſt of a Nation, we ſhall not only be ready to approve of, but even to anſwer for the Succeſs of any Enterprize concerted with ſo much Wiſdom. We of this happy Kingdom are able to produce aſtoniſhing Proofs of the great Conſequence of proper Means, wiſely and uprightly employed. We have ſeen Deſigns that have had for their Foundation, the Honour and Dignity of the Crown, and the Rights and Advantages of the People, that have been planned

ned by the greateſt Abilities, and executed with equal Talents, ſucceed beyond the moſt ſanguine Expectations. But I would not preſume too much on theſe fortunate Events, the final Iſſue of which it is not in the Power of human Sagacity to foreſee. All that can be pronounced with Certainty is, that where Wiſdom, Integrity, and Reſolution are united, they are the moſt likely Means, as far as human Power extends, to obtain Succeſs.

It is wonderful to think what a Man of this great Character can do. — He fills every Breaſt with his own Spirit — Men are eager to imitate his Virtues — They are aſhamed not to do their Duty — They catch the noble Flame — They carry it into diſtant Regions — The perſuaſive, the animating Example excites them to ſacrifice their Eaſe, their Fortunes, their Health, their Lives, in Support of ſo wiſe, ſo juſt, ſo virtuous an Adminiſtration.

I can fairly appeal, not only to every Member of this great and honourable City, which

is

is cloſely connected with this renowned Merit, and happy in the Connection, but to every Man, — to every diſintereſted Man, in the Nation, if his Heart does not glow with a Love and Admiration of theſe illuſtrious Virtues.

But all human Power is Weakneſs, all Man's Wiſdom Fooliſhneſs, without the Aid and Guidance of the great Lord of the Univerſe: All Knowledge and Experience, all Strength and Courage, every Quality, and every Ability, is weak and vain, unleſs He is pleaſed to ſend his Bleſſing upon them.

It is not the Sword or the Spear, or the Multitude of an Hoſt, that can bring Succeſs, unleſs *the King of Kings, and Governor of all Things, whoſe Power no Creature is able to reſiſt*, ſhall ſave and deliver his Servants from the Hands of their Enemies. Yet muſt it be an unſpeakable Joy, to every great and good Man, and a never-failing Support in the Duties of his Station, to think that God hath promiſed, in his holy Word, in the Book of eternal Life, to protect

and aſſiſt thoſe who put their Truſt and Confidence in him, *who call upon him out of a pure Heart* — The *Lord upholdeth the Righteous*, — *He ſhall give his Angels Charge over thee* — *The Salvation of the Righteous cometh of the Lord, who is alſo their Strength in the Day of Trouble.* — *Great Proſperity giveth he to his King, to his Anointed, and to his Seed for evermore.*

Let us then confirm theſe divine Truths; let us proclaim the great Mercy and Goodneſs of God, in vouchſafing ſuch ſignal Succeſſes to his Majeſty's Arms; and ſending his Bleſſing on thoſe Endeavours which have been uſed for the Chaſtiſement of a faithleſs and inſolent Enemy. Let us in the deepeſt Senſe of our own Unworthineſs, in a profound Veneration of God's infinite Power, and in the Voice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving, ſay, with the heavenly Hoſt; *Salvation, and Honour, and Power, and Glory, be unto him that ſitteth on the Throne.* — *Great and marvellous are thy Works, O Lord God Almighty! Juſt and true are thy Ways, O King of Saints!*"

It

It would be unneceſſary to repeat all the Inſtances of Succeſs with which the divine Providence hath bleſſed the Arms and Councels of our moſt gracious Sovereign: But ſome ſtriking Particulars muſt not be omitted, tho' it is difficult to ſay where we ſhall begin to ſpeak of the Bleſſings of Heaven to theſe Kingdoms, or open the Scene of his Majeſty's Glory and Happineſs.

When his Enemies, for a while victorious, threatned utter Deſtruction to his Dominions, and preſumptuouſly flattered themſelves with the Certainty of Succeſs; the God of Heaven interpoſed, gave a wonderful Preſence of Mind to the Princely Commander, Firmneſs and Intrepidity to the Soldiers, and, by a total Defeat of the Enemy, turned the King's Mourning into Victory: A Victory which will be remembered to the Honour of the *Britiſh* Infantry, as long as the Sun endureth; and which, conſidered in all its Circumſtances, plainly diſcovered the Hand of Heaven, and proved that *the Lord God of Iſrael fought for Iſrael.*

But

But the Aſſiſtance of Heaven on our Side hath not been confined to one Part of the Globe; His Majeſty's Arms, under the divine Direction, have been victorious in every Quarter of the World; the Triumphs on the *American* Continent, obtained under the Diſadvantages of Climate, Situation and diſproportionate Numbers, are great and aſtoniſhing. Every Man beholds thoſe Wonders with Rapture and Amazement; though his Joy muſt feel a Check, at the Loſs of that gallant Commander who fell in compleating the wonderful Victory.

God hath been pleaſed alſo, particularly to bleſs his Majeſty in the Friendſhip of his great and Royal Ally, who by his extraordinary Wiſdom, Valour and Experience, by every great, and every amiable Quality, hath purchaſed to himſelf a Name ſurpaſſing all the Names of Antiquity.

And yet our Happineſs doth not even end here. We triumph on the other Element, and the

the Seas bear the Enſigns of our Glory: And ſurely it is a Circumſtance never to be forgotten, that the Number of the Slain in Battle, on our Part, is ſmall and inconſiderable, when compared to the great Variety and Importance of our Conqueſts.

Let then the ſacred Truth burſt from our Lips, in the religious Sentiment of the royal Pſalmiſt, *The Lord of Hoſts is with us*; *The God of Jacob is our Refuge.*

The Bounties of Heaven are unlimited — We have another Bleſſing which calls aloud for Acknowledgment and Gratitude.

We are aſſembled to return our unfeigned Thanks to God, for moſt ſeaſonably granting us at this Time, an uncommonly plentiful Harveſt. *The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. He turneth the Floods into a Wilderneſs, and drieth up the Water Springs. A fruitful Land maketh he barren, for the Wickedneſs of them that dwell therein. Again he maketh the Wilderneſs a ſtanding Water, and*

Water Springs of a dry Ground. — While other Nations have ſuffered by Scarcity, while their Land has been drenched with Blood, and their Fields have languiſhed and mourned; God *hath crowned our Year with Goodneſs*; *our Folds have been full of Sheep*; *our Vallies have ſtood ſo thick with Corn, that they have laughed and ſung.*

This is an Æra in the Annals of *Great Britain*, which Poſterity will remember with Admiration and Reverence. They will think us an happy Generation; Surely then we ought to think ourſelves ſo. We ought to make ſuch a religious and moral Uſe of the marvellous Things which God hath done for us, as may beſt expreſs our Gratitude to him, and ſecure his future Favour: And, in the Height of our Joy and Thankſgiving, to conſider that he, who hath given us ſuch Cauſe to rejoice, expects that we ſhould not ſuffer *our Proſperity to deſtroy us*, by being led to think *our Hill ſo ſtrong that it cannot be removed.*

With

With our ſincere and hearty Thanks for theſe wonderful and manifold Bleſſings, let us add our unfeigned Prayers to the Throne of Grace, and beſeech Almighty God to defend and protect theſe Kingdoms in their Religion, Liberties, and Commerce, and to give us, in his good Time, a ſecure, laſting, and honourable Peace; that he would be pleaſed, as the moſt happy Means to ſo glorious an End, to guard and prolong the Life of our moſt gracious Sovereign, and to bleſs and preſerve the Royal Family; that when the greateſt and beſt of Kings, full of Days and Honour, ſhall change his temporal for an eternal Crown, We may never want a Prince, of his Illuſtrious Houſe, bleſſed with all the Virtues of his Anceſtors, to reign over theſe Kingdoms, in great Dignity and Proſperity, and to govern a free, dutiful, and united People, in Righteouſneſs, Juſtice and Mercy. *Amen.*

FINIS.